



ILLINOIS HOMELAND SECURITY UPDATE

April 12, 2002

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GOVERNOR

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- FEMA recently released information concerning Citizen Corps for local officials. The Citizen Corps Guide for Local Officials provides information to local entities on how to start their own Citizen Corps Council in their community. Currently, 40 communities across the nation are creating these councils, including 3 here in Illinois. These councils can work within existing groups to strengthen communities through a broad network of volunteer efforts. For more information on Citizen Corps or to download the Local Officials' guide, please visit www.citizencorps.gov.
- The American Red Cross (ARC) continues to meet with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to address collaboration on President Bush's Citizen Corps initiative.
- House Bill 4446, legislation initiated by the ARC to allow state and local government disaster volunteers to serve out of state, has passed the Illinois House of Representatives unanimously and now heads to the Senate. The legislation would provide additional training opportunities for state and local employees to be better prepared for a disaster or weapons of mass destruction event in their communities.
- Chicago has implemented a "monthly readiness database" for trained volunteers and staff which will provide an increased rapid response to emergencies in Illinois and throughout the country.
- The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) participated in a chemical stockpile emergency preparedness program contingency plan exercise for the Newport, Indiana, nerve agent storage facility. Emergency Operations staff participated at the forward command post in Chrisman, Illinois. As a result of this activity, the IEPA is reviewing the exercise and may modify its response plan.

- All lakes which were closed as a result of the September 11th attacks are now open. No incidents have been reported at any of the lakes since re-opening.
- Two Illinois Department of Nuclear Safety (IDNS) representatives attended the Illinois Geographic Information Systems Association meeting in Champaign to exchange experiences with other state and local government agencies on the use of computer-aided mapping and data programs in emergency response.
- IDNS will join representatives from FEMA, Massachusetts, and the American Red Cross on a panel discussing considerations surrounding the stockpiling of potassium iodide tablets for the public during a plenary session at next week's National Radiological Emergency Preparedness Conference in Milwaukee.
- IDNS Local Government Support Division staff will provide in-service training on Radiological Hazmat Preparedness during the IESMA (Illinois Emergency Services Management Association) Conference on April 19-20 in Springfield. The training is available for all county Emergency Services & Disaster Agency (ESDA) coordinators as part of an on-going program to update radiological monitoring equipment for local emergency response organizations.
- The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) recently completed a reference card for first responders on primary biological terrorist agents which provides general information on biological agents, including safety precautions and preventive treatment/vaccine/treatment options. The biological agents addressed in the reference card include: Anthrax, Botulism, Brucellosis, Pneumonic Plague, Smallpox, Tularemia, and Viral Hemorrhagic Fevers. The card should be delivered to first responder organizations in May.
- IDPH staff attended the "Adjacent States Prepare for Public Health Emergencies" meeting in Missouri to discuss multi-state response issues for an act of bioterrorism. Topics discussed at the meeting included selection and use of volunteer resources, risk communication strategies, multi-jurisdictional aid, and reciprocity granted by states for medical and other personnel sent to another state. Missouri, Oklahoma, Nevada, Wisconsin, Tennessee, Kentucky, Nebraska, Arkansas, and Kansas were also represented at the meeting.

- On May 28-30, 2002, the IDPH will present *'Preparing the Heartland, The Illinois Bioterrorism Summit' - 2002* in Oakbrook, Illinois. The purpose of the summit is to provide local health department staff and other medical and public health officials with a comprehensive overview of the federal, state and local bioterrorism preparedness activities that are ongoing in Illinois. Additionally, the summit will provide a forum to facilitate networking among DPH, local health departments, and the medical community. Mr. Richard Preston, author of *The Hot Zone* and *The Cobra Event*, will provide the opening keynote address. The summit's closing keynote address will be presented by Dr. Neal Cohen, former Commissioner of the New York City Health Department.
- As of April 8, the IDPH Springfield and Chicago laboratories have processed 1,693 samples. All have been negative for anthrax.
- The Internet continues to provide virtually limitless opportunities for the perpetuation of fraudulent activities by unscrupulous operators. Consumers must remain aware of this potential and employ the appropriate safeguards to protect their financial accounts and personal data from being compromised. Reports have been received by law enforcement agencies of persons who have been targeted for an on-line "confidence" scheme in which a purported foreign official seeks assistance for the deposit of a large sum of money in the targeted subject's personal bank account. Various reasons - none of which are plausible - are given for needing to transfer the foreign government's monies to a personal account in the United States. These reasons are always accompanied by the promise of substantially more money to come for persons who are willing to help. These get rich quick schemes have the potential only to make money for the person who is running the scam, and the victim only has the potential to become financially poorer. Do not be duped by promises of fast, easy money made through unsolicited e-mail contacts. The adage, "If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is" may well be the best guide to follow in these cases.